

Ocean County

Office of Senior Services



August 2010 Update

*Joseph H. Vicari,
Freeholder Chairman*

D. Jane Maloney, Director



A Message From Joe Vicari: Freeholder Chairman

The Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) encompasses significant changes and opportunities for people with Medicare, particularly those with low income.

Community Services Inc. has received a grant to help seniors, individuals with disabilities and their caregivers apply for special assistance through Medicare.

The grant, made possible by The Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008, will be used to conduct community outreach activities and help eligible individuals apply for programs that pay some or all of their Medicare Parts B and D premiums, deductible, co-insurance and/or co-payments.

The programs promoted by the grants include the Medicare Savings Programs known as QMB, SLMB, and QI-1, the Medicare prescription drug program's Low Income Subsidy (LIS), as well as the state's Pharmaceutical Assistance to Aged and Disabled Program (PAAD).



***The One-Stop Center
1027 Hooper Ave.,
Bldg. 2, First Floor
(732) 929-2091
1-877-222-3737
or 1-800-668-4899***

Freeholder Joseph Vicari joins Jane Maloney, Director of Senior Services, Jim Sigurdson, Director of Community Services, Inc. and the Directors of the Senior Outreach Centers throughout the county in rolling out an important outreach initiative to help eligible persons apply for Medicare Savings Programs that pay some or all of their Medicare premiums.

- **Qualified Medicare Beneficiaries (QMB)** which covers all approved out of pocket Medicare expenses for individuals with limited assets who are living below the federal poverty level, which is currently \$10,830 for a single person and \$14,570 for a married couple. Individuals enrolled in QMB with assets up to \$4,000 if single and \$6,000 if married, are also eligible for Medicaid coverage.
- **Specified Low-Income Medicare Beneficiaries (SLMB)** and Qualified Individuals-1 (QI-1) pay Medicare Part B premiums for individuals with incomes currently starting at \$10,830 to \$14,621 for individuals and at \$14,570 up to \$19,670 for married couples. Changes in the Medicare law effective January 1, 2010 raised the program's asset limits to \$6,600 for individuals and \$9,910 for couples. An individual's primary residence and vehicle, if used for medical appointments or for work, are not counted as assets. The Part B premium normally ranges from \$96.40 to \$110.50 per month and is usually taken directly out of a person's Social Security check.
- **The Low Income Subsidy (LIS) Program** helps persons with the costs of Medicare Part D. These costs include their annual deductible, monthly premiums, and co-payments or coinsurance amounts for each prescription. To be eligible for LIS an individual must have an annual income of less than \$16,245 and resources less than \$12,510. The income and asset limits for married couples are \$21,855 and \$25,010 respectively. The asset levels assume the applicant plans to use \$1,500 for burial expenses. **For further information, call Office of Senior Services at 732-929-2091.**

“BETTER CHOICES, BETTER HEALTH” Take Control of Your Health

The Chronic Disease Self-Management program has helped many people in Ocean County enjoy healthier, happier lives. This program is NOT about illness, but about taking control of your life, managing the disease and symptoms, and enjoying life more.

The program meets once a week, for 2 ½ hours, for six weeks. People find that the time flies by as they learn new ways to cope with life. This is for anyone living with, or caring for someone with, ongoing illness, such as arthritis, diabetes, hypertension, lung or heart disease. Programs are held throughout Ocean County. For information on attending a 6-week workshop or becoming a leader, please contact Louanne Kane at **732-349-8389** or at Lkane@comcast.net.

IMPORTANT SERVICE CHANGES COMING TO OCEAN RIDE

Ocean Ride is confronting a difficult budget issue. In recent months, County officials have worked collaboratively with a combined advisory and stakeholder committee to formulate a series of service recommendations designed to provide additional revenue for this important service.

Our goal is to introduce policy and service changes to preserve and sustain Ocean Ride's core services in an effort to maintain the mobility of our riders.

Effective August 2, 2010

- Changes to Ocean Ride bus routes such as reducing the number of service days for each route and raising the rider fare for seniors to \$.35 cents.
- Changes to Reserve-A-Ride – converting the voluntary donation policy to an actual fare.
 - o Standing order trips such as dialysis, chemotherapy and radiation will require a \$5.00 round trip fee.
 - o Routine Appointments - \$ 4.00 per round trip. Riders will be billed for actual service provided. There is no cash handling on board the Reserve-A-Ride vehicles.
 - o Other policy issues, trip limits, distance and frequency of service.
- Ocean Ride is no longer able to accept new riders for dialysis transportation. A list of private transportation providers is available for residents.

For further information, contact Ocean Ride at OceanRideinfo@co.ocean.nj.us or visit our website at www.co.ocean.nj.us/Transportation or call us at **732-736-8989 ext. 235**.

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SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as Food Stamps, is a nutrition assistance program to help low-income individuals and families buy the groceries they need for good health.

As of April 1, 2010, you can have more income and resources and still be eligible for SNAP! Eligibility depends on several factors like income, resources, and household size.

People in Household Monthly Income

1	\$1,670
2	\$2,247

The increase in the amount of money and resources has made more seniors eligible for the SNAP (Food Stamp) Program. For more information, call the Ocean County Board of Social Services, at **732-349-1500**. You can also go to www.njfoodstamps.com to apply online.

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"Making it Easier For Seniors To Choose Services"

www.co.ocean.nj.us

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